

*True Copy of the Paper delivered by Brigadier Rookwood, to the Sheriffs of London and Middlesex, at Tyburn, the Place of Execution; April 29 1696. With REFLECTIONS thereupon.*

THE Sheriffs of London having not thought fit to Publish the Paper delivered to them by Brigadier Rookwood at Tyburn, the Place of his Execution, April 29th. our *Jacobites*, who watch all Opportunities to shew their good Will to the Government, think to have found a favourable Occasion to vent their Splice against it: And thereunto, the Executor of that Malefactor has Printed the Paper of his Deceased, with a Preface of his own, wherein he tells us, That *Wills of dying Men were ever* *fulfilled, and as such ought to be fulfilled.*

I won't Argue now against this Florid Sentence, but if he calls such Papers as this a *Will*, I think they are not to be always fulfilled. For, if a Criminal should, at the Place of Execution, deliver a Paper to be Published, wherein, instead of giving any sign of Repentance, he should endeavour to vindicate some abominable Opinions, and teach the belief and fear of God is but a Trick of Politicians, or a Cheat of the Priest; that it is lawful to murder his Neighbour, to destroy whole Cities by Fire, and commit all manner of Crimes without any Scruple or Remorse; no Man that keeps yet any Correspondence with good Sense, will allow that the Will of such a Man ought to be fulfilled; but is rather to be suppressed, lest the Publisher should in some manner render himself guilty of the Crimes of the Author.

What Reason the Sheriffs have had for not Printing Rookwood's Paper, I don't know; but our *Jacobites* believe that they were afraid that it should make some disadvantageous impression over the People, they are much mistaken; for after all, it comes very short of the Impudence of the Papers of Charnock, Friend, and Perkins, as we will see.

*Here begins the PAPER.*

*Having commended the Justice of my Cause, and recommended my Soul to God; whose Mercies through the Merits of Jesus Christ, I boldly cast my self; I had resolv'd to die in Silence; But second Thoughts of my Duty to others, Chiefly my True and Liege Sovereign K. James, moved me to leave this behind me,*

Whosoever considers the horribleness of an Assassination, will not be surprized that the *Author* should have resolv'd to dye in silence; it was the best thing he could do in such a Cause, unless he had a mind to shew publicly his Repentance for a Crime which was (as he owns few Lines after) *against his own Judgment*; but second Thoughts, or the Advice of a Friend, moved him to leave a Paper behind him, lest his silence should be interpreted against the late King, and others.

Whether or no the Malefactors already Executed, knew that King James was privy to the design of Murthering his Majesty, it does not matter at all; but 'tis very plain from their Behaviour, that they are sensible of the strength and evidence of the Proofs we have against him, and afraid that every body will believe him guilty of that Villany. This fear breaks their silence, and obliges them to vindicate his Reputation. All almost in the same Terms, which by the by, falls out a little unluckily, for it gives a surmise that their Papers came from the same Pen. Charnock it seems, had no greater concern for him, since the last words he spoke to the Sheriff, was to desire him to tell King James when he should return, *That he had neglected his own Interest to Vindicate his Reputation.* What Mr. Rookwood means by *others*, is in my Opinion, difficult to guess at; for there is no body vindicated in his Paper, but his late Liege Sovereign; and therefore I judge by way of Conjecture, that he understands the Romish Church. I don't question but Popish Priests are as malicious as our *Schismatics* Clergy men, but they have more Prudence and Discretion, and therefore they will have their Men to explain themselves; and to convince People that their Church is not so black as we have represented it. They don't go about to justify their Action by its Principles, as the Disciples of Cook, Collier, and Sney have done by the Doctrine of theirs. It was but fit then that Rookwood should tell the World that he was engag'd in that Design only by the Duty a Soldier owes to his Commander.

*I do therefore, says he, with all Truth and Sincerity, Declare and Avow, I never new, Saw, or Heard, of any Order or Commission from K. James for the Assassinating of the Prince of Orange, and Attacking his Guards; But I am Certainly inform'd, he had rejected Proposals of that Nature, when made unto him.*

As these are almost the very same words that Charnock made use of, † See the Post. I refer the Reader to the Reflections I made † thereupon; wherein I think I proved beyond any Contradiction, that both King James and the French King were privy to this horrid design. Well, let it be so that Rookwood never knew it; but does it follow from thence, that King James is innocent? He was but a Soldier, as he says, and it would be a pretty thing, if every Souldier in the Army should know the Orders of the General? 'Tis enough that they know that they are to obey him, by Vertue of the Commission he has from the King his Master; and therefore when Rookwood resolv'd to obey his Commander, he must needs have believed that he had a Commission for what he did, for else he would not have obeyed in so nice a Matter as this was, and therefore the following words signifie nothing.

*Nor do I think, says he, He knew the least of the Particular Design of Attacking the Guards at his Landing, in which I was engag'd as a Soldier, by my Immediate Commander, (much against my Judgment,) But his Soldier I was, and as such I was to Obey and Act.*

I have not Charity enough to believe a word of this, for Rookwood was not mad, and this is ten times worse than Madness it self, if what he says is true. He knows that the late King James had rejected Proposals of this Nature, and yet he engages in it. Was not this a downright Disobedience in a Soldier who eat his Bread? unless, contrary to what he says, He knew, or at least believed that his Prince had alter'd his Mind, and approved what his Commander Sir George Barclay was adoin'g? But let us see how this agrees with the next Paragraph.

*Near twelve Years, I serv'd my true King and Master King James, and freely now lay down my life in his Cause. I ever Abhor'd a treacherous Action even to an Enemy. If it be a Guilt to have Complied with what I thought, and still think to have been my Duty, I am Guilty, No other Guilt do I own.*

I don't know what to make of this Discourse, or guess what he calls a treacherous Action. He pretends to Dye in King James's Cause, and yet he knows that King James had rejected the proposal of Assassinating the King. He thinks that it was his Duty to obey his Commander, and yet he believes that such a thing was against his Master's Inclinations; as if the Authority of his Commander did not derive from him. I don't see any sense to be upon these words, saving only, that Rookwood (I suppose now what he says true) did not know that King James knew the Design of the Assassination, but yet had so good Opinion of him, that he thought he should be very glad if the thing was done. I am sure I had never have such an opinion of my King and Master. Let us see the conclusion.

*As I beg all to forgive me, so I forgive all from my Heart, even the Prince of Orange, who as a Soldier ought to have consider'd my Case, before he Sign'd the Warrant for my Death. I pray God to open his Eyes and render him Sensible of the much Blood from all Parts Crying out against him, so to prevent a Heavie Execution Hanging over his Head, than what he Inflicts on me.*

'Tis very surprizing indeed, that because the King is a Soldier, he would not forgive a Soldier who design'd to Murder him in cold Blood; but who can read the latter part without Horror and Indignation? Were this published in the East Indies, would not they believe there that we swim in Blood? and yet not above 12 Persons have been Executed upon this account, in Eight Years time, or since this Kings Reign. Every body knows that Clemency has been the only fault of this Government, and that the excess of that Vertue has more than once brought it to the very brink of its ruin. The Publisher of this Paper and his Gang, are living Monuments of the truth of what I say, for notwithstanding the impudence they have in publishing to the World, that they have been ever since the Revolution, Conspiring against the King and the Nation, as appears by the repeated Proposals made to King James, to take away his Majesty's Life; yet for all that, they find still Mercy from the King and the People.